

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, President Gerald and Mrs. Betty Ford are two of the finest people I have ever known. They came, as I do, from Michigan, great citizens of Michigan.

I happen to have had the great pleasure of serving with the brother of President Gerald Ford, Tom Ford, in the Michigan Legislature; and, in that fashion, I met Gerald Ford many, many times when he was minority leader here in the House where he conducted himself very, very well, was chosen, in a wise decision, to become the Vice President of the United States, and then succeeded to the presidency of the United States.

He and his wife brought to the White House exactly what America needed at that time. They brought decency and a concern and helped heal this Nation. This Nation and I personally are grateful to President Gerald and Mrs. Betty Ford for what they have done for this country. They certainly deserve this medal and certainly deserve this ceremony in the rotunda.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 196, to reserve the Rotunda of the Capitol for a ceremony to present a Congressional Gold Medal to our distinguished former President, Gerald R. Ford, and our former First Lady, Betty Ford, for their "dedicated public service and outstanding humanitarian contributions to the people of the United States."

I was among the more than 300 cosponsors of legislation, enacted on October 21, 1998, to authorize this honor.

Since the American Revolution, Congress has commissioned Gold Medals as its highest expression of national appreciation for distinguished achievements and contributions. Each medal is individually struck to honor a particular individual or individuals, institution, or notable event.

President Ford is the first former President to be so honored during his lifetime, and this is also the first time that a President and First Lady have been honored jointly.

Congress has awarded Gold Medals to several distinguished men during their military careers who would later go on to become Presidents of the United States:

George Washington, by the Continental Congress before the Revolutionary War began in 1776; Andrew Jackson in 1815; William Henry Harrison, in 1818; Zachary Taylor, three times, in 1846, 1847, and 1848; and Ulysses S. Grant, in 1863.

President Harry S. Truman was honored posthumously in 1984.

Mrs. Ford will be the second First Lady to be so honored; the first was Lady Bird Johnson in 1984.

Gerald Ford is, of course, best known for his service as the 38th President of the United States who attempted to move the Nation past the scars left by the Watergate scandal.

He was the first person in history to have been appointed Vice President of the United States to fill a vacancy, pursuant to the 25th amendment to the Constitution.

He was confirmed in that office by vote of this House and of the Senate.

He was also the first person to have assumed the Presidency, in 1974, without having been elected to national office. As such, Gerald Ford served the Nation for two years and five months as President under very trying political circumstances.

But Gerald Ford is best known to this chamber as a "Man of the House", who served from 1949 to 1973 as a Representative from Michigan and from 1965 to 1973 as minority leader of the House.

While Representative Ford could be tough and partisan, he represented a tradition of bipartisanship and friendship across the aisle which served the House and the Nation well for many years. His accession to the Presidency was welcomed with joy by Members of Congress from both parties.

In his retirement, the former President has often spoken out against the divisiveness and harsh partisanship which have enveloped our political institutions in the decades after he left office, and which have so damaged the national interest.

Betty Ford, a model of an outspoken and courageous First Lady in the White House, is perhaps best known since her retirement for showing Americans who suffer from personal despair that recovery is possible.

She established the Betty Ford Center, to help those seeking to reestablish productive lives after suffering from drug dependency.

She has been active in many philanthropic causes.

Madam Speaker, the Fords were perhaps the first modern "First Family" to jointly lead both active public and private lives once out of office, and they established a pattern for other Presidents and spouses to follow in the future.

They set a worthy example of service to America, and I am pleased to support our action today in approving this ceremony to recognize their achievements.

Ms. STABENOW. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 196, which will allow us to use the Rotunda to present a fitting tribute to President and Mrs. Gerald Ford—the Congressional Golf Medal. I would like to thank Mr. EHLERS, who now represents the Grand Rapids area, for his work on this measure.

We are all aware of President Ford's political accomplishments: a 25 year career in the House of Representatives, serving as vice-president and then president. Throughout his career he represented Michigan and this country with dignity and was a great example to those that have followed in his footsteps in this House. He will forever be associated with the University of Michigan, and he always carried this pedigree proudly. President Ford ascended to the highest office in the land during one of the most turbulent periods in our political history, and it is the grace that he and his wife Betty comported themselves that is perhaps their greatest legacy. President Ford restored a sense of stability to the office that was absolutely essential for both domestic and foreign relations. Among her many accomplishments, Mrs. Ford's dedication to helping others fight the terrible effects of breast cancer and substance abuse is well-known, and is illustrative of the caring decency this family came to represent.

Madam Speaker, Gerald Ford answered the call when his country needed it most. His example of professionalism in the worst of circumstances helped the United States through one of its worst constitutional crises. I look forward to seeing this wonderful couple receive this well-deserved award, and I join my colleagues and the citizens of this country in thanking them for their devoted service.

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMAS. Madam Speaker, I have no other requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 196.

The question was taken.

Mr. THOMAS. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. THOMAS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 196.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

#### MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 8 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1700

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GIBBONS) at 5 p.m.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 2670, DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE, JUSTICE, AND STATE, THE JUDICIARY, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

Mr. COBURN. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct.